

WS-02987A-15-0284

ORIGINAL



0000164475

Arizona Corporation Commi

Utilities Complaint Form

Investigator: Jenny Gomez

Phone: <<< REDACTED >>>

Completion Date: 10/22/2015 12:19

Opinion Number: 2015 - 127043

Priority: Respond within 5 business days

Opinion Codes: Rate Case Items - Opposed

Opinion Date: 10/22/2015

First Name: Karen

Last Name: Christian

Account Name: Karen Christian

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Company: Johnson Utilities L.L.C. dba Johnson Utilities Company

Division: Water

Nature Of Opinion

Arizona Corporation Commission

Docket Number: WS-02987A-15-0284

DOCKETED

Docket Position: Against

Subject: Please file to Docket WS-02987A-15-0284

OCT 23 2015

Dear Commissioners

DOCKETED BY

It is with great distress I feel obligated to write to you again. This time, it's somewhat personal, and I'm no lawyer, and won't try to put too much legalese in this, only my thoughts on the process over the standpipe issue. Desiring that you recognize your obligation to the public by whom you are elected, and you verify thoroughly the practices of a "public service" utility company towards its customers.

As I am to presume you are aware, I was contacted originally by Mr. Nick Myers regarding the sudden turnoff of his account the first part of June this year. He inquired what to do. I advised him if unable to work out a resolution with the company, file complaint to the ACC, which he did.

While I was out of town the end of July, the July 24th letter to the standpipe customers, which was also posted on their website, was submitted stating there would be a permanent shutdown of the standpipe. This was cause for great distress among many standpipe users in the community. Once again, I was contacted to come to a meeting standpipe users were putting together, to simply explain proper complaint processes. This is what I did. Ironically, at that meeting, I mentioned our group "San Tan Valley Safe Water Advocates" was in the process of incorporating and going non-profit, but had let original filing slip by due to personal reasons. This is seen on a video from that meeting.

Then, on August 5th, another letter sent to the Commissioners from Johnson Utilities COO, Brad Cole, stating they now had the intent to install main water lines to homes in the rurals. Within that letter, the false accusation of me personally was made, referring to the group "she started" stating I had created "an uproar within the community and media." This was again stated in their September newsletter as well.

I want you all to be fully aware, and others would testify to this as well, that I did nothing of the sort. I was "invited" to speak to the community. I also informed the people who were considering a protest with their trailers/haulers in front of the JU offices, that this is not a wise thing to do, as it will only provoke the situation more. Thus, it was at my suggestion this did not happen. So, would you call this "creating an uproar?"

Next, around August the 15th, after discussing with my husband, we decided we should go ahead and incorporate immediately. When going onto the ACC website to do this, our community organization's name (San Tan Valley Safe Water Advocates) had been taken. This was on August the 10th. Taken by another entity that is owned by the same owner of Johnson Utilities, Mr. Johnson. Why? What was the reasoning other than to intimidate those of us who have attempted to be above reproach in working with customers to

Arizona Corporation Commission Utilities Complaint Form

do things right, in light of any issues they perceive is wrong? In my opinion, this is extremely unprofessional as a "public service" provider. Knowing full well our group name has been out in the public for over 2 years and was even mentioned in the letter by the company, dated August 5th to the ACC along with my name.

There have been other concerns in the past regarding this type of behavior that seems to be in a form to intimidate customers who have concerns. We have tried to be above reproach in our manners, and yes, I did change the name of the original Facebook page over 2 years ago now, due to I felt it important to handle things in a professional, above reproach manner, and turn the tide of the hostility that has been rampant in our community toward the company for years. Learning all I could, along with a few others about how the ACC works, water issues across the state (not just in our community), along with many other aspects of the water/sewer industry overall, I've become involved in assisting others in our state also (municipal water issues).

Why am I writing this? In reading recent filings to the docket requesting it be closed it seems nothing has been mentioned by staff regarding how all of this came about and the actions of the company. I am concerned that much of what has gone on through this is being ignored. The timeline of events, the issues that were brought forth during the open meeting, including some surprises to the ACC such as the dismantling of standpipe without notifying ACC of this until during Open Meeting, along with how certain things were and were not communicated to the community.

At the time of the first letter to the ACC stating lines would be laid, along with the Open Meeting, no mention of costs to the community was mentioned. Now, some are saying they don't have the deposit requirements asked for, let alone the ability to repay for 2 years the HUF's etc. Of course I've encouraged them to please contact the company to inquire about a possible agreement on that as well. However, the original implied information was that the Johnson Family Trust would be paying for this, with no mention of other costs until the first meeting they held with the community members at the school in San Tan Heights. (Which, btw, Mr. Johnson stated his children had "nothing to do with JU" during the open meeting in reference to Roadrunner Transit, yet Chris Johnson, owner of RRT was at the meeting explaining what it was "we" (JU) was going to do with the line installs). This was video recorded btw. (Affiliate rules don't come into play here?)

Granted, most recognize this is a once-in-a-lifetime offer. However, this community isn't privy to the ins and outs of legalese jargon, nor how all of this works. Most just want to turn on their faucets or hoses and get water. Some are already stating they can't afford it, so despite the long haul, they will continue hauling. As someone stated, the overall costs to hauling their own water will be much greater than these costs. Has JU considered doing a special tax through the county on the homes affected? This was done by Queen Creek awhile back for some areas that needed lines, and it was extremely cost effective and that way ALL property owners were able to connect in a feasible manner.

So, first I'd like to ask that the Commission address our standpipe customer's concerns with the company, and ask the company to contact each customer personally, not just by mail, and see what they can do to assist them in helping to get their lines hooked up. Even, if possible, a reduction of deposit over a few months. Next, I'd like to ask the commission to consider the ramifications of the overall behavior during this time by the company towards myself and those who have done their best to assist so that there was NOT a "uproar in the community". We only want what is best for our residents and want to see positive responses to the community, including in the newsletters.

Also, to address the "implied contracts" with not just Mr Myers, but the standpipe account holders. The "Tariff" argument, in my opinion, shouldn't be the issue when this was done in the middle of the summer without notifying you, the ACC. Arbitrarily and capriciously shutting it down, without first attempting proper business procedures in protecting the standpipe with security, ie: cameras should be primarily the first choice. Now, customers can't afford HUF's and people are being told work may be halted if no one is signing up.

That leaves me with my last point. Again, yes, we are thankful for all JU's owners are doing to get lines to these customers. We hope they will continue to work with them. However, we also desire to see the negative

**Arizona Corporation Commission
Utilities Complaint Form**

responses, such as incorporating our group name for no other reasoning's we see other than some sort of retaliation towards us (me in particular, since my name was mentioned multiple times in documents and open meeting, along with the September newsletter) to be handled by the commission to remind the company they are "public service" servants. They serve us. Reprimanding us, or intimidation tactics, or what is perceived as resentful behaviors should not be tolerated.

Do not close this docket before considering the multitude of issues involved.

I thank you all for your time and consideration in this issue.

Karen Christian

602-502-4154

		Investigation	
Date:	Analyst:	Submitted By:	Type:
10/22/2015	Jenny Gomez	Telephone	Investigation
Noted and filed for the record in Docket Control.			
